



# Unified Fitness Clubs

1969 - 2019

## INTRODUCTION

**Special Olympics Unified Fitness Clubs** are locally organized fitness-focused groups that give members a way to exercise year-round. Clubs are formed using the Unified Sports® model, matching people with and without disabilities (partners). While walking is the most common activity, clubs are encouraged to expand the range of activities based on community resources and interests of the group. Clubs earn points by tracking activity data collected from a fitness band, with points accumulated to earn the club and individual members various incentives.

For more information: Abbie Ivaldi (317-328-2020) or (aivaldi@soindiana.org)  
 Website: <http://soindiana.org/unified-fitness-clubs/>



**Purpose.** Unified Fitness Clubs exist to provide opportunities for Special Olympics athletes, others with intellectual disabilities, and members of the community to engage in regular physical activity that promotes improved health and fitness, better understanding of healthy lifestyles, and friendship.

**Registration.** Clubs can register year-round using the online form located at <http://soindiana.org/unified-fitness-clubs/>. Club members eligible for Special Olympics must be registered as a Special Olympics athlete. Unified Partners must be registered as Class A volunteers. See Page 215 for the Unified Fitness Club Roster.

**Leadership.** Unified Fitness Clubs activity must be led by one Special Olympics athlete and one Special Olympics volunteer (known as co-directors) who participate in training in how to run a club.

**Fitness Devices (MovBands).** Each registered Unified Fitness Club member receives a free Movband2 for tracking activity. Clubs may choose to upgrade to a Movband4 device for \$25.00 each. The **MovBand4** is a device that is easy to re-charge, syncs wirelessly through a mobile app, and is waterproof. There are some other brands of fitness devices (Fit Bit) that sync with the HealthSpective (DHS) platform. Special Olympics Indiana handles:



- acquisition of Movband fitness devices
- the annual cost of UFC members being part of the tracking platform
- replacement or repair of broken or lost devices

## Incentives.

- **Individual** members receive a special **Unified Fitness Club medal** once they reach the 500 mile plateau of miles walked or ran as recorded through their device.
- Individuals then receive a **reward pin** when they reach 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, 2,500, 3,000 and 4,000 mile plateau achieved afterwards (4,000 through 9,000).
- Any Unified Fitness Club member who reaches 10,000 miles will be declared a **Grand Champion** and is recognized at a Special Olympics Indiana event and in the State Office.
- **Clubs** can earn incentives through participation in Club Challenges that are offered at least 4 times a year. These challenges may last for a week, or an entire quarter of the year and result in the club or all its members receiving a valuable prize.
- Clubs are eligible for incentives only if they collect member health metrics.
- From time to time universal events will be held (e.g. 5K Walk/Run or Nature Walk) where all participants receive a specially-designed pin.

**Active Participation.** Any club or member who is inactive for six (6) months will be moved to “inactive status” and must re-register to participate. Any member inactive for one (1) year will result in removal from the HealthSpective (DHS) tracking platform.

**Miles Walked/Ran.** All activity recorded since the start of the program (2017) accumulates for members of Unified Fitness Club members. Club incentives for miles walked/ran concluded as of April 15, 2018. Club incentives going forward will be based on quarterly challenges only.

**Health Metrics.** Unified Fitness Clubs will receive devices to assist in collecting important health metrics from the members (height, weight, and blood pressure). Training will be provided in how to use the devices. Information collected will be used for grant reporting purposes and will remain confidential. Overall results of health metrics collection will be used to document the impact of regular group exercise within Special Olympics.

# Unified Fitness Clubs

## Membership:

- Unified Fitness Clubs are organized by co-Directors (one Athlete and one Partner) who register the club with Special Olympics Indiana. <http://soindiana.org/unified-fitness-clubs/>
- All club members must be registered as SO Indiana athletes or volunteers, with between 25% and 75% of members being individuals with IDD.
- Athletes must have a completed *Application for Participation Form* on file at SO Indiana. A person with IDD is not required to be active in Special Olympics sports training to be a member of a Unified Fitness Club.
- Partners must complete requirements for a Class A volunteer. See Page 14 for details.
- There is no minimum or maximum number of members, but the larger the group the easier it is to match people by ability for training.

## Participation:

- Clubs are expected to organize a group walk (or other activity) at least once per week. Clubs also encourage individual members to be physically active (in safe environment) outside of club activities.
- Walking is suggested to be the main activity because it is appropriate for all levels of fitness, it does not require a facility or equipment, and it helps participants earn miles quickly; however, other fitness activities can be done in conjunction with walking or instead of walking (hiking, stretching, yoga, Zumba, biking, strength training, etc.).
- Fitness Club activities may occur in conjunction with sports practice, but it must be activity beyond sports training or skill development.
- Clubs are year-round, with weekly exercise and once a month lesson on a health topic (e.g. stretching, hydration, nutrition) as provided by Special Olympics Indiana.
- Periodic “challenges” will be organized to focus training and create intra and inter-club interaction.

## Active Unified Fitness Clubs (as of January 2019)

Adams-Wells Co.	Gibson County	Mishawaka Young Adult Services	Tippecanoe County
Area 9 Management Team	Hamilton County	Montgomery-Parke Co.	Turnstone (Allen County)
Benton County	Henry County	Noble County	Vanderburgh County
Boone County	Howard County	Porter County	Vigo County
Cass County	Huntington County	Posey County	Washington County
Clark-Floyd Co.	Jackson County	Pulaski County	Washington Township
Clinton County	Johnson County	Putnam County	Wayne County
Decatur County	Kosciusko County	Scott County	White County
Delaware County	Lake County	Shelby County	
Dubois County	Lawrence County	Spencer County	
Franklin County	Marion Co. - NE	St. Joseph County	

- Health metrics, photos, and success stories are requested for grant reports and general publicity.

## Activity Tracking:

- Steps/miles/moves must be tracked through SO Indiana-provided Movbands or other approved activity trackers, with data synced on the HealthSpective (DHS) platform weekly.
- Both athletes and partners should use a tracking device (**devices not issued until registration is complete**).
- To help document the impact of the program, club members are expected to provide health metrics (i.e. height, weight, BP, RHR, steps, and lifestyle survey) two or three times a year.
- Clubs and participants earn incentives for reaching various levels of activity.

